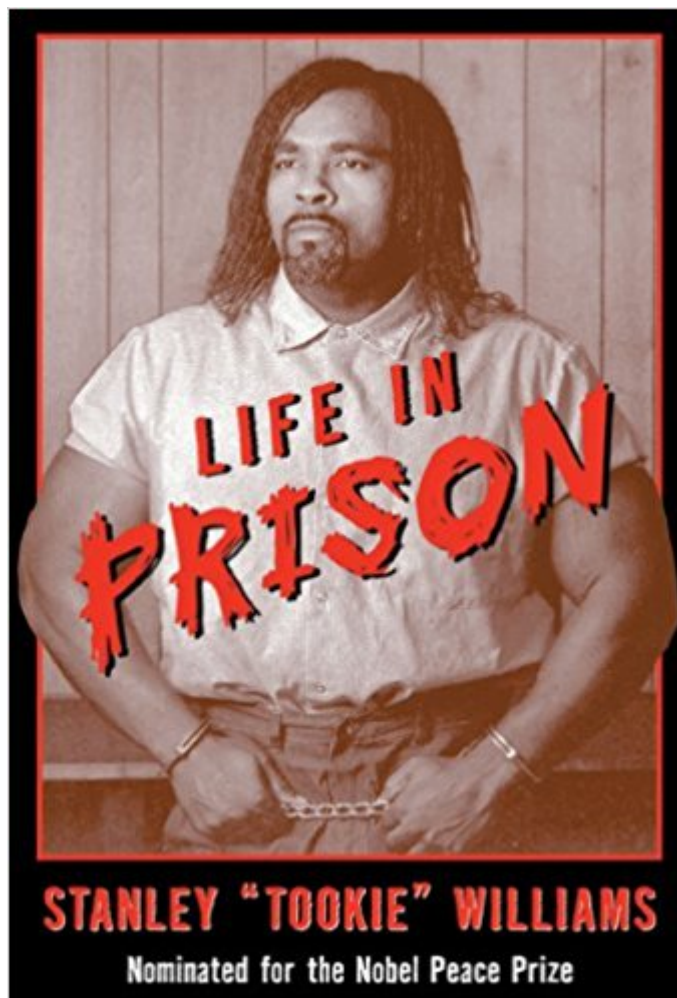




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Life In Prison



Synopsis

"The true stories I've written in this book are my living nightmares. My greatest hope is that the lessons the stories offer will help you make better choices than I did." Stanley "Tookie" Williams, cofounder of the notorious Crips gang, is a death-row inmate. But in his two decades of incarceration, Williams has also become a respected author and activist whose dedication to ending gang warfare in the lives of inner-city children has earned him a 2001 Nobel Peace Prize nomination. In this award-winning book which has drawn praise from educators, government leaders, and families alike Williams describes the brutal reality of being an inmate. He debunks myths of prisons as "gladiator schools" with blunt, riveting stories of overwhelming homesickness, the terror of solitary confinement, and the humiliation of strip-searches. Williams' words are a frank challenge to adolescent readers to educate themselves, make intelligent decisions, and above all, not to follow in his footsteps.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1020L (What's this?)

Paperback: 80 pages

Publisher: Chronicle Books; Reprint edition (February 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1587170949

ISBN-13: 978-1587170942

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Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 104 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #199,532 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Law & Crime](#) #51 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Violence](#) #1325 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 7

Customer Reviews

As a boy, Williams heard the older kids who'd served time tell stories that made prison sound glamorous and fun, a place to hang out with your friends and prove how tough you were. But now, after 16 years on San Quentin's death row for the murders of four people, Williams (Gangs and

Violence), co-founder of the notorious Los Angeles Crips gang, knows that prison "is no place you'd ever want to be." In this slender volume, he explains why: the cramped quarters, lack of freedom and privacy, homesickness, violence and daily indignities (strip searches, having to use the toilet in public). Williams often goes beyond mere description, asking readers to imagine or emulate his experiences ("To get a feel for what it's like to live in a prison cell, test yourself. Spend ten hours?nonstop and alone?in your bathroom"), an effective technique. Though the book's stated goal is to warn kids away from Williams's path, its matter-of-fact, often homogenized tone connotes more of a plea for sympathy than a caution intended to frighten kids. Co-author Becnel's foreword contributes to this problem, although the stark black-and-white photographs of Williams, San Quentin and other prisons and prisoners toughens the tone to some degree. Those concerned that purchasing the book will profit a convicted killer can be reassured: Williams's royalties will be donated to the Institute for the Prevention of Youth Violence. Ages 8-up. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 6 Up-A cofounder of the notorious Crips gang in California recounts his life on death row. Chapters with titles such as "the hole," "rules," and "the strip search" include graphic, disturbing descriptions of prison life and this inmate's reaction to his incarceration. At the end of each chapter, Williams encourages readers to think about aspects of their lives that bother them, or that they take for granted, and consider what these issues are like for a death-row inmate. The author is straightforward about details of his life, and the book is written in a conversational, approachable tone. Black-and-white photos of Williams and fellow San Quentin prisoners are painful reminders of the life he is trying to steer kids away from. The book may leave readers wanting to know more about this man's work with violence prevention. However, it is a sobering personal view of life behind bars. Carol Fazioli, The Brearley School, New York City, NY Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Daughter loves this book

Tookie williams. R.i.p

This book is very educational for young men to see how it really is in the prison system

this book is good! makes me not want to go to prison at all. this is a must read for people that keep

acting up. not a long book at all. some of it had me shaking my head.

I missed the "Grade 6" and up. Large type, pictures, 80 pages, simple language. It is written specifically for children. About a 15 minute read. Doesn't make it bad, but I wanted to make this clear.

I LOVE THIS BOOK!

It's a great book for the purpose -- kind of a "scared straight" book, written by a life-term inmate with the street credibility of a co-founder of the Crips. There's no insight about how Williams came to be "found guilty of killing four people in two robberies" -- maybe that would mess up potential appeals. Nor is there much insight about the gang life outside prison. The book could benefit from mentioning the effects of a shorter term in prison, such as for robbery or drugs. The vast majority of inmates aren't in for life, but for shorter terms. By concentrating on how hard a life sentence is, does that leave an implication shorter terms are "not that bad"? Why not some discussion of how a felony conviction can cramp one's style for life, even for someone who is used to living on the edges of society?

Only after his death does this book now have significance as he had many years behind bars and changed his mindset in spite of the fact that they said he was arrogant and hostile during his execution. He did a lot of good for the kids to keep them out of gangs.

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